1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

853 in the gardens and the baby cries for milk, the infant may
854 be suckled by another woman, if one with milk happens to be present. But this is not done normally, and usually only the mother nurses her child.

852 Within a few weeks after the birth a "doctor" is called to
789 make "medicine" which will make the newly-born infant
751 strong. In Lesu, the doctor for this kind of medicine was the elderly man Tsengali, and this is his medicine. He stands by the *purpura* tree and recites the following spell:—

Strong, strong, strong, strong.
Strong head,
Strong arm,
Strong breast,
Strong stomach,
Strong leg.

The spell contains the wish that each part of the infant's body mentioned become strong. As soon as he has finished his recitation Tsengali takes a small leaf from the tree, chews it, and spits the chewed leaf into a bigger leaf from the same tree, which he folds over it as a cup. Then he pours a little water over the chewed leaf and gives it to the infant to drink. This "medicine" is supposed to have a prophylactic value and prevent the infant from having sores and other ills, and in general to make him a strong child.
[853] There is some idea, which I was not able to understand very clearly, that the mother's milk may become contaminated by the food she eats, and make the infant ill. This "medicine" is supposed to remove any bad effect resulting from impurity in the mother's milk. In discussing this idea, one native who had worked on a white man's plantation told me that a white woman gives her child goat's milk, or tinned milk, to avoid contamination from her own milk. Tsengali is paid two or three strings of *tsera* (shell currency) every time he makes the "medicine."

853 Now that the proper medicine has been made, everyone